

established by the sword. This crack-brained prophet is merely the old priest in a new form. Every one must swear by his revelations at the peril not only of his soul, but of his body, for refusal. His inner light, which flashes from the Divine Spirit into the human soul, is as intolerant as the fierce zeal inspired in a Dominic, or a Loyola by visions of the Virgin or the saints. The only good side of him lies in his sympathy with the miserable, for his dreams and visions are divine revelations to smite the oppressor. But they lack the element of justice, unless we regard justice as a wild upwelling of passion, which will show no mercy to any one whom an ill-regulated fancy deems God's enemy. Fanatics of this stamp are the most terrible of tyrants, and Miinzer's kingdom of God at Muhlhausen is a terrible theocratic tyranny, in which only the elect are to wield authority, and remorselessly crush freedom of opinion, individual liberty.

In these schemes of agrarian and civic reform the emperor seems almost to have disappeared, and the fact is a striking reminder of the inanition to which the central government had been reduced. The *Reichsregiment* of Maximilian—the imperial regency or government—had proved a miserable failure as an attempt to strengthen the imperial authority. The real authority lay with the princes in their respective territories. The empire was but a name; the Diet merely the creature of the princes. The peasants looked indeed to a rejuvenated emperor as their ideal protector against their oppressors, but they were unequal to the task of formulating any scheme of imperial reform. Social reform in town and country, "according to the word of God " more or less, and the mood of the moment, was their aspiration. The ferment of the time, however, stirred other minds than those of peasant politicians and evangelical preachers into activity, and in the scheme of Wendel Hipler, secretary of the Count of Hohenlohe and clerk of the Palatinate, and Frederick Weigant, the Vineyard Steward (Keller) of the Archbishop of Maintz at Miltcnberg, we see the highest intellectual effort in political reconstruction. Hipler and Weigant were not original. They merely adapted the so-called "Reformation of Kaiser Frederick III." to the times, but they had the instinct of the patriotic statesman, and they strove to combine imperial with social reform, as well